

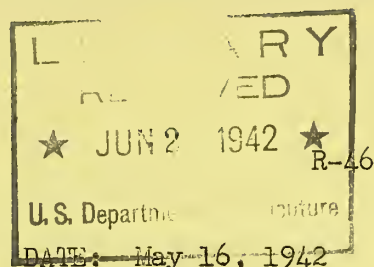
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CONSUMER TIME



NETWORK: NBC

ORIGINATION: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 AM-EWT

Produced by Consumers' Counsel Division of the Department of Agriculture,
and presented in cooperation with United States Government
agencies working for consumers

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER . . RINGS TWICE . . CLOSE DRAWER
2. NANCY: That's your money buying food.
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER
4. JOHN: That's your money paying for a home.
5. SOUND: CASH REGISTER
6. NANCY: That's your money buying clothes . .
7. JOHN: Buying you a living in wartime.
8. SOUND: CASH REGISTER . . CLOSE DRAWER

9. MONTGOMERY: This is Don Montgomery talking . . Consumers' Counsel in the Department of Agriculture in Washington.

Each Saturday at this hour we broadcast CONSUMER TIME because you've asked us for facts. You want to know how to spend your money wisely . . how to make it work for war. . . and how it can buy the health and strength and courage we need for victory.

You ask us for facts - you have a right to. And we're glad to give you what we have.

And now - for the war news of the week from our consumer reporter, Johnny Flynn ---

10. JOHN: And here it is - straight from Washington.

11. JOHN: And that's about all the important orders this week that affect you, your pocketbook, and your family living.
12. FREYMAN: But what about the big order on price ceilings, Johnny? You promised to explain that to us consumers last week --- and then when CONSUMER TIME was cancelled ---
13. JOHN: We were just as sorry about that as you were, Mrs. Freyman. So we postponed price ~~ceilings~~ to this week. I've been quizzing the Office of Price Administration - getting the facts to answer your questions.
14. FREYMAN: I'm glad you have the answers. There are so many things that are puzzling about that price ceiling order.
15. JOHN: Just to start us off, Mrs. Freyman . . do you know what next Monday is?
16. FREYMAN: Next Monday? Why . . no.
17. JOHN: What's the date?
18. FREYMAN: Well, today is May sixteenth . . so next Monday would be May eighteenth. But . . .
19. JOHN: May eighteenth is right . . it's a red letter day for consumers, all right.
20. FREYMAN: Red Letter day, Johnny? Why do you say that?

21. JOHN: Because next Monday you are going to walk into grocery stores, drygoods stores, every kind of a store, and find out that your Government has done something to control the cost of living.
22. FREYMAN: I remember . . . that's the date the new price ceilings start working.
23. JOHN: That's right.
24. FREYMAN: Let's stop right here, Johnny, and let me get a couple of things straight.
25. JOHN: All right.
26. FREYMAN: I know you've mentioned it before . . . but . . . just what is this price ceiling order? I mean, what does it do?
27. JOHN: Very simple, Mrs. Freyman . . . It says to your storekeeper . . . "Mr. Storekeeper, don't charge Mrs. Freyman any more than the highest price you charged her or anyone like her - for the same thing last March."
28. FREYMAN: It says that to every store I buy at?
29. JOHN: It says that to every storekeeper, whether you bought from him before, or never saw him before.
30. FREYMAN: And does it say that about everything I buy?
31. JOHN: No, not everything, but a great many things you buy now have ceilings over their prices.

32. FREYMAN: But tell me again, just what is that ceiling price?
33. JOHN: It's the highest price a store charged for the same thing last March.
34. FREYMAN: Does that mean the store must charge that top price?
35. JOHN: No, not at all. It means that the store must not charge one cent more.
36. FREYMAN: Not one cent more than they charged last March.
37. JOHN: No more than the highest price charged in March.
38. FREYMAN: You mean, the highest price they charged me?
39. JOHN: No . . . the ceiling is not the highest price you paid, Mrs. Freyman. It's the top price the store charged anyone like you . . . that is the ordinary consumer buying in the store.
40. FREYMAN: Does every store have its own ceiling prices on things?
41. JOHN: Yes, that's so.
42. FREYMAN: Then there isn't just one ceiling price for stockings, say, . . . or for canned goods, wherever they are sold.
43. JOHN: Oh no. There is no single price ceiling for each kind of product. Each store has it's own top prices.

44. FREYMAN: That's a little confusing, Johnny. I should think it would have been easier to have one top price for one kind of article . . say, stockings.
45. JOHN: I can explain that, I think, in this way . . suppose you buy most of your groceries and meats at a cash and carry store . . .
46. FREYMAN: Yes.
47. JOHN: You can't telephone in your order, can you?
48. FREYMAN: No.
49. JOHN: And you can't have your groceries delivered.
50. FREYMAN: That's true.
51. JOHN: And you can't run a charge account. .and all the rest.
52. FREYMAN: No, but there is another store in the neighborhood where I can get all those things.
53. JOHN: But that other store charges higher prices for its goods, doesn't it.
54. FREYMAN: Yes, it does.
55. JOHN: So naturally, the ceiling prices in that store will be higher than the ceiling prices in the cash and carry store.

56. FREYMAN: I see. But are there different price ceilings for different qualities of things . . stockings for example.
57. JOHN: Definitely. Each type and grade . . or quality . . of the article will have a different price ceiling.
58. FREYMAN: Then if one store's top price last March for a certain quality stocking was seventy-nine cents . . the ceiling price there now will be seventy-nine cents.
59. JOHN: Yes, that 's it. And if the top price last March for another grade was a dollar fifteen, the ceiling for that grade of stocking will be a dollar fifteen.
60. FREYMAN: But, Johnny how will I know what the ceiling price is? How can I be sure I'm not being charged more?
61. JOHN: That's why I said next Monday . . May eighteenth . . is a red letter day for consumers . . you're going to see those price ceilings.
62. FREYMAN: I'm going to see them?
63. JOHN: You certainly are . . on a great many things.
64. FREYMAN: How? And where? And what does a ceiling price look like?
65. JOHN: (LAUGHING) Well, it probably won't look any more exciting than any other price tag or sign. But this tag will say, "Price Ceiling - seventy-nine cents." Or maybe . . "Our ceiling is seventy-nine cents."

66. FREYMAN: And those new signs are going to be posted up for everything?
67. JOHN: No, not for everything . . but they will be posted for most of the ordinary things that you need . . . cost-of-living commodities, they're called.
68. FREYMAN: And they include, I suppose, clothing and foods and . .
69. JOHN: Not all foods, Mrs. Freyman. And before I forget . . those price ceiling tags don't necessarily have to be right on the article itself.
70. FREYMAN: They don't?
71. JOHN: No, they can be on the shelf or on the bin --- somewhere near the article. So you can compare the price you are charged - with the ceiling price.
72. FREYMAN: I see . . But - about foods, Johnny. You said that some goods won't have price ceilings.
73. JOHN: That's right.
74. FREYMAN: Well, won't all this be pretty confusing? I mean - suppose my neighbor Mrs. Miles, who hadn't talked this over with you at all, were to go to the store on Monday ---
75. JOHN: All right - just suppose she does. She'll probably go right up and ask her storekeeper about it - won't she?

76. FREYMAN: Probably.
77. JOHN: That's his name.
78. FREYMAN: Mr. Baxter.
79. SOUND: START TO SNEAK IN STORE EFFECTS. CASH REGISTER, OFF.
80. JOHN: Okay - she'd walk up to Mr. Baxter and ---
81. SOUND: FADE IN CASH REGISTER, DRAWER CLOSING.
82. MOTHER H: Mr. Baxter ---
83. BAXTER: (FADING IN) Ah - good morning, Mrs. Miles.
84. MOTHER H: Good morning! I'm not so sure. How come you've marked two prices on so many things in your store?
85. BAXTER: Oh, that extra one is the ceiling price.
86. MOTHER H: Ceiling price! Has that started already?
87. BAXTER: Starting today - May eighteenth.
88. MOTHER H: My land! And I don't know anything about it!
89. BAXTER: Well, here - I'll show you. Now, what were you planning to buy?
90. MOTHER H: Let's see . . . Got my list here somewhere . . .
91. PRINGLE: (FADING IN) Mr. Baxter - will you please wait on me?
92. BAXTER: In a minute, Mrs. Pringle. Soon's I finish with Mrs. Miles ---

93. PRINGLE: But I'm in such a dreadful hurry - !
94. MOTHER II: Ah - here's my list. Meat - thought I'd get some round steak - top round. Harry likes it.
95. BAXTER: All right - here's our ceiling price for top round steak, Mrs. Miles. Thirty-five cents a pound. That's the most we charged for it here in this store any time last March.
96. MOTHER II: Why do you say "in this store?"
97. BAXTER: Because other stores may have charged more for it in March. If so, their ceiling price is now higher.
98. MOTHER II: You mean - if I went to Mr. Smith's store, I'd have to pay more?
99. BAXTER: I can't say as to that, Mrs. Miles. What I am saying is that his ceiling price depends on what he charged for this same grade of top round last March.
100. PRINGLE: Mr. Baxter ---
101. MOTHER II: I see. And your ceiling price for top round is thirty-five cents.
102. BAXTER: That's it. But our selling price - the price we're actually selling this meat for today - is thirty-three cents.
103. PRINGLE: Mr. Baxter - please - !

104. BAXTER: Just a minute, ma'am ---
105. MOTHER H: Selling - and ceiling. Ah - now I get it. And your selling price can't go a penny above your ceiling price - no matter what other stores may charge.
106. BAXTER: No matter what. It can't go above what I charged for top round back in March. That way you'll know prices can't keep on going up and up.
107. MOTHER H: But will I be getting just as good meat for my money?
108. BAXTER: What do you mean, Mrs. Miles?
109. MOTHER H: I mean - maybe you might sell me a lower grade beef for that thirty-five cents. That way I'd really be getting less for my money - without knowing it.
110. BAXTER: Well, there's one very easy way to guard against that, Mrs. Miles. Always buy Government graded meat.
111. MOTHER H: Oh - of course!
112. PRINGLE: Really, Mr. Baxter ---!
113. BAXTER: Sorry, Mrs. Pringle ---
114. PRINGLE: I won't take up much of your time ---
115. BAXTER: But these are important - these things Mrs. Miles is asking about. She's got to know what to look for.

116. PRINGLE: Humph! What difference does it make whether she looks for Government grades or not?
117. BAXTER: Well, it doesn't matter in this store - 'cause that's all we sell, Government grades. Every single bit of meat in this store is marked "U. S. GOOD."
118. MOTHER H: But it would matter over in Mr. Smith's store. His meat isn't Government graded.
119. BAXTER: You see, Mrs. Pringle - no matter whether prices go up or down, the standards for U. S. Government grades stay just the same.
120. PRINGLE: You mean to tell me the meat you sell is the best on the market? Why, I've bought meat at Smith's ---
121. BAXTER: Not the best - no. There are other Government grades that go higher - and some lower. But their prices are higher and lower too. I sell the U. S. GOOD grade- because that's the one that seems to suit the taste and the pocketbooks of most of my customers.
122. MOTHER H: It helps a lot to know just what you're paying for, Mrs. Pringle ---
123. PRINGLE: But I ---
124. MOTHER H: You see, if you buy according to quality grade, you know you're getting your money's worth. You can get Government grades in canned goods too - and bedsheets, and ---

125. PRINGLE: Well, I haven't time to bother about that sort of thing. I trust my storekeeper ---
126. MOTHER H: It's not a matter of trust, Mrs. Pringle ---
127. BAXTER: No, it's just being a smart buyer. Now, Mrs. Miles here wants to know all about price ceilings, and ---
128. PRINGLE: All right - I'd like to know about price ceilings too. I want some lamb chops. What's the ceiling on those?
129. BAXTER: No ceiling price on lamb, Mrs. Pringle.
130. PRINGLE: No ceiling price?
131. BAXTER: Lamb is one of the exceptions.
132. MOTHER H: What are the rest of the exceptions, Mr. Baxter?
133. BAXTER: Oh, fresh fish - poultry ---
134. PRINGLE: Listen here - I've wasted enough time ---
135. BAXTER: Mrs. Pringle - I thought you wanted to know ---
136. PRINGLE: Well!
137. BAXTER: I - I'm sorry ---
138. PRINGLE: If this is the kind of service I get in your store - I think I can get along very well without it. I'll take my trade to Mr. Smith. (TURNING OFF) Good day!

139. BAXTER: (SOTTO) Good day!
140. MOTHER M: Good day? I'm afraid I lost a customer for you, Mr. Baxter.
141. BAXTER: I hope you did. She's more bother than she's worth. Always sending things back - because she don't know how to buy in the first place.
142. MOTHER M: Looks like she'll never learn.
143. BAXTER: She don't care. Serves her right if she ever gets gypped.
144. MOTHER M: Well now - about that meat. Have you got a nice piece of top round?
145. BAXTER: Here you are. Government grade stamped right on it.
146. MOTHER M: MM-hm... How much does that piece weigh?
147. BAXTER: We'll see . . .
148. SOUND: BUTCHER'S SCALE.
149. BAXTER: Pound and three quarters ---
150. MOTHER M: Wait - let me see --- (THEN, SMILING) Not that I don't trust you ---
151. BAXTER: (LAUGHING) That's okay, Mrs. Miles. Look all you're a mind to. You're the one that pays the money ---
152. SOUND: STORE SOUNDS FADE.

153. FREYMAN: (ON CUE) Then - Johnny - I guess I'd better learn just what to look for.
154. JOHN: Right you are, Mrs. Freyman.
155. FREYMAN: Ceiling prices --- selling prices --- weights, and Government grades.
156. JOHN: You'll be helping yourself and your storekeeper a whole lot if you do. This isn't any easy job for him either, you know - figuring out price ceilings for all his different articles.
157. FREYMAN: I should think it might take some time to get the whole thing going.
158. JOHN: It probably will. But meanwhile, you consumers should keep on asking all the questions you can think of --- so you're sure you understand just how this new price order works - and which things will have price ceilings.
159. FREYMAN: Wish I had a list of them - so I could learn that. Especially about the different foods ---
160. JOHN: I've got that right here for you - on a Consumer Tips card.
161. FREYMAN: Let's see . . . Yes, Johnny - this is exactly what I need. Which foods will have ceiling prices - and which won't.

162. JOHN: Well, you can get a copy of this Tips card by writing in to the Consumers' Counsel at the Department of Agriculture.
163. FREYMAN: Can't I have this one?
164. JOHN: Sorry - everybody's supposed to write in.
165. FREYMAN: But I won't get it by Monday.
166. JOHN: You'll get it just as soon as we can send them to you. So you'd better write in quick.
167. FREYMAN: What should I ask for - the tips on price ceilings?
168. JOHN: That's it - and tell us your own name and address and the call letters of the radio station over which you heard this program.
169. FREYMAN: Well, that's simple enough. And I'm glad to find something simple in this price ceiling business. It all sounds so complicated ---
170. JOHN: Well, suppose we call on our Consumers' Counsel to give us the main points we ought to remember. Mr. Montgomery - you know all the ins and outs of this thing ---

JOHN: And don't forget our gift offer for this week. The Consumer Tips card that will tell you which foods have price ceilings and which ones don't.

FREYMAN: I won't forget that, Johnny. I'm going to write in to the Consumers' Counsel for my copy this very afternoon.

JOHN: That's the place. The Consumers' Counsel - Department of Agriculture - Washington, D.C. And be sure to tell us your own name and address and the call letters of your radio station.

ANNOUNCER: Did you catch all that - the rest of you? For your copy of the Consumer Tips on food price ceilings, write to the Consumers' Counsel - Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. And don't forget to include your own name and address and the call letters of the radio station to which you are listening. Just ask for the Tips on price ceilings, and we'll be glad to send it to you.

Next week CONSUMER TIME will bring you more valuable facts from your Consumers' Counsel in the Department of Agriculture, presented in cooperation with Government agencies working for consumers.

Heard on today's program were Ken Banghart, Nell Fleming, John Flynn, Evelyn Freyman, Nancy Ordway, Whit Vernon, and your Consumers' Counsel Donald Montgomery.

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THE HISTORY OF THE
UNIVERSE